

John A. Ford

Wells Tannery, 94

John Allen Ford, 94, Wells Tannery, died Tuesday, October 6, 2015, at UPMC, Altoona

Born July 25, 1921, in Wells Tannery, he was the son of the late Lamberth and Elsie (Baumgardner) Ford. He was married to Gladys Figard on December 22, 1947, in Hagerstown, by Rev. H.C. Gonso. She preceded him in death on June 27, 2007.

He is survived by two sons: Gregory Alan Ford of Everett, and Jeffrey Edward Ford and wife Brenda, Marshall, Texas, and grandsons: Corbin Ford of Bethel, Ark., and Ethan Ford of Marshall, Texas.

He was preceded in death by two brothers: Teddy Ford and Glenn "Pete" Ford and three sisters: Violet Yount, Florence Young and Ethel Thomas.

Growing up on the family farm he enjoyed tilling the soil and hunting. Both of these "farm boy" traits were permanent fixtures of his life. He maintained a garden until his death and always looked forward to the first "green tomatoes" and sweet corn of the season. Only days before the stroke that claimed his life, he was on

his tractor plowing a field, while savoring the aroma of freshly turned earth. He was an avid coon hunter, spending many a night trekking through the woods to where the dogs had "treed" their elusive prey. He had a good eye for a quality coon dog and knew how to train them.

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These skills led him to travel to and participate in organized UKC and AKC coon hunts, culminating in his being awarded the 1968 Pennsylvania State Championship. Fox and coyotes also had to be wary when he was around, for his keen eye and tracking skills, sent them running for cover.

As a young man he worked in the coal mines and construction. Many a person received their education in a school where the concrete floor was "finished" by John Ford's strong arms. Though no statue on campus honors him, many of the buildings at Penn State bear the mark of his dedication to doing the job right. Even today, as our military leaders in the Pentagon plan how to address threats to our nation, they stand on a solid foundation he helped construct.

As we say goodbye to another of our country's "greatest generation" we honor his military service in WWII. Serving in the 1769 Ordnance Supply and Maintenance Co. of the 9th Air Force, he landed on the coast of France on D-Day +2. At the Battle of the Bulge his company was advancing toward the front lines to retrieve damaged vehicles, while our troops were retreating from the advancing Germans.

Returning from the war, he settled down in Wells Valley and raised two "baby boomers." On weekends you would find him playing third base and pitching for the local baseball team. The post-war "grandstand" stands as

a remembrance to the "Tannery boys" gallant efforts to win one for the hometown. In the closing years of his life he remained true to the community, serving as one of a number of local men who gather every two weeks to mow the grass at the community park.

Playing "pitch and catch" with his two boys was a common sight in the Fords' yard. He was a faithful husband and father who loved his wife and encouraged his sons in all their endeavors.

He knew the value of hard work and during the summer sometimes took one of his sons to work with him, to impart this important life lesson. He retired after working many years as a cement mason with the New Enterprise Stone and Lime Co. However, never content to sit and watch the world go by, he began a long stint as Wells Valley's township supervisor. There he dedicated his efforts to a number of much-needed repairs to the local roads and bridges. Once again those ole "farm boy" instincts came to bear in engineering repairs and operating snowplows and backhoes.

A loving grandfather, he instilled a strong work ethic in his Texas grandsons on many summer visits. Tractor rides and how to shoot a gun were frequent occurrences.

Funeral services were held Saturday, October 10. y Rebecca Drover officiated. Internment was at Wells Valley Presbyterian Cemetery. Military honors were conducted by Fulton Honor Guard.

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Arrangements were by Howard Sipes Funeral Home of McConnellsburg. Online condolences at howardl-sipes.com.

Memorial donations may be made to to Portion for Orphans c/o Cypress Valley Bible Church, (cypressvalley.org) 4190 W. Pinecrest Drive, Marshall, TX. 75670 or Wells Valley Presbyterian Church, Wells Tannery, PA 16691

Ford Obituary Addition

In last week's obituary of John Ford of Wells Tannery, he was also survived by a brother, Paul Ford, Wells Tannery, and numerous nieces and nephews.